

**Education Bureau Circular No. 11 / 2018
Enhanced Quality Assurance Framework for Kindergarten Education**

[Note: This circular should be read by –

- (a) Supervisor and Heads of Kindergartens, Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres and Schools with Kindergarten Classes – for action; and
- (b) Heads of Sections – for information.]

SUMMARY

This circular sets out details of the enhanced Quality Assurance (QA) Framework for kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres and schools with kindergarten classes (hereafter collectively referred to as “KGs”) under the kindergarten (KG) education scheme (Scheme). Education Bureau (EDB) Circular No. 15/2012 dated 13 August 2012 is hereby superseded.

BACKGROUND

2. The Government has implemented the new KG education policy starting from the 2017/18 school year to provide good quality and highly affordable KG education, and enhance the accessibility of children to different modes of services that suit their specific needs. Enhancing the QA Framework is one of the means to improve the quality of KG education under the new policy. All KGs participating in the Scheme (Scheme-KGs) will continue to be subject to the QA Framework comprising School Self-evaluation (SSE) and Quality Review (QR), both of which are conducted on the basis of the PIs. To ensure the effectiveness of QA, EDB has refined the Performance Indicators (PIs) in consultation with experts and frontline practitioners in early childhood education¹. The refined PIs will be used for SSE starting from the end of the 2017/18 school year and used for QR starting from the 2018/19 school year. Details of the enhanced QA Framework are set out in the following paragraphs.

¹ Please refer to EDB Circular No. 20/2017 for more details.

DETAILS

School Self-evaluation

3. As an integral part of the QA Framework, all Scheme-KGs are required to conduct ongoing SSE for school development and accountability. In the past years, KGs have demonstrated progressive improvement in conducting SSE and accumulated experiences to embed SSE in schools' daily practices to promote school development. KGs should make full use of the evidence readily available in school for SSE to avoid unnecessary documentation and preparation. KGs are encouraged to continue to adopt a whole-school approach when conducting annual self-evaluation and to utilise their self-evaluation findings for strategic planning so that the inter-connected self-evaluation processes, viz. planning, implementation and evaluation can be efficiently implemented for sustainable school improvement. Following the existing practices, KGs are required to use the School Report template to record the self-evaluation findings and formulate the school development plan for the next school year. The [*School Self-evaluation Manual*](#) has been updated and made available on the EDB website for reference of schools.

4. To enhance transparency and accountability, KGs are strongly encouraged to make their School Report accessible to their major stakeholders including parents through different means, such as uploading the School Reports onto their school websites.

5. For KGs not joining the Scheme, they are also encouraged to conduct their SSE with reference to the refined PIs for schools' continuous improvement.

Quality Review

6. QR serves to complement SSE to foster the sustainable development of KGs. All Scheme-KGs will undergo QR for validation of their self-evaluation and be assessed if they have met the prescribed standards. The next cycle of QR will start from the 2018/19 school year. The timing for conducting QR at individual KGs will be determined on the basis of random selection of KGs each year with adjustment with regard to the time interval between the previous and upcoming QRs. For more details regarding the QR mechanism, please refer to the [*Handbook on Quality Review for Kindergartens*](#) on the EDB website. Results of the QR would be taken into account when considering KGs' application for joining the Scheme. On the other hand, taking into account views from KGs and parents, we will upload both Chinese and English versions of the QR reports onto the EDB website starting from the 2018/19 school year for public information.

7. To enhance the transparency of the QR mechanism, EDB has involved external independent members as external observers in some QR visits since the 2013/14 school year. They are all experienced experts in early childhood education not serving in the education sector. To further enhance the transparency and capitalise on the professional knowledge and experience of frontline KG principals, a pilot scheme will be launched to include serving KG principals as external observers in the 2018/19 school year. Similar to the existing practice, external observers will share their observation with the KGs at the end of the QR visits, but will not assess school performance.

Support for KGs

8. While QR adopts a holistic approach, Focus Inspection is conducted as another form of quality assurance measures in fostering KGs' continuous improvement in learning and teaching and in addressing areas of concerns. EDB will conduct more frequent Focus Inspection to KGs, including both Scheme-KGs and non-Scheme KGs, starting from the 2018/19 school year. KGs will be informed of EDB's observations and recommendations for improvement for schools' reference in planning follow-up actions.

9. To promote the sustainable development of KGs, EDB will continue to organise training activities to support KGs in capitalising on the experiences gained in implementing the QA Framework. Good practices identified during QR and Focus Inspection will be disseminated to promote quality KG education.

ENQUIRIES

10. For enquiries, please contact the Kindergarten Inspection Section at 2892 5458.

Mrs CHAN SIU Suk-fan
for Permanent Secretary for Education